

MEDICARE

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, the American people have a right to know where their elected officials stand on issues. And America's seniors have a right to know what their elected officials want to do to Medicare. House Speaker NEWT GINGRICH has been quoted as saying that he wants Medicare to "wither on the vine." Now the Republicans are saying he did not mean that. They are trying to get an ad that uses Speaker GINGRICH's quote off the air.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the Republicans are trying to rewrite history, claiming that Speaker GINGRICH meant that the Health Care Financing Administration would wither on the vine not Medicare. But as the New York Times pointed out on Saturday "Not only is it hard to imagine how individuals—except perhaps its employees—could leave the agency, this is only one of the explanations Mr. GINGRICH gave at the time."

The Republican budget proposes \$168 billion in Medicare cuts over the next 6 years. All to pay for tax breaks for the wealthy. Truth in advertising—it is what the American people demand and what they need to hear.

MEDICARE

(Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, it seems as though in the heat of the campaign season, some people just do not like to face the truth. The Republicans right now are running away from their record in the 104th Congress, a report where they are going after Medicare to fund tax breaks for the very rich.

Just think about their budget. They ran on deficit reduction, but what did they do when they came here? They want to cut taxes \$245 billion over 7 years. Better than half of that money goes to individuals and families earning over \$100,000. What are they going to do to pay for this big tax cut? Well, they are going to cut \$270 billion from the Medicare Program. What is that going to mean to senior citizens? It is going to mean out-of-pocket expenses that are going to grow for them.

Mr. Speaker, NEWT GINGRICH said we are not going to kill it right away because that would not be politically popular. We are going to let it die on the vine.

Now what do the Republicans want to do? They want to run away from their record of this statement. They want to say, cut off all advertising that tells the truth about what the Republicans intend to do with Medicare.

MEDICARE: SENIORS BEWARE

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, NEWT GINGRICH is now running away from this quote and saying that he did not mean to say that Medicare would wither on the vine, but the bottom line is that the Republican leadership's actions and the legislation that they pass in this House would accomplish that goal.

By cutting Medicare by \$270 billion in order to finance tax breaks for the wealthy, essentially what happens is that the Medicare Program will not have enough money to finance quality health care for seniors and the level of services for seniors. In addition, the Republican Medicare plan would have doubled premiums and forced seniors out of traditional Medicare because they would no longer have their choice of doctors. That is what the Republican Party is all about.

Lest anybody think that they were not going to continue this policy, they voted on another budget this year in this House of Representatives that again would slash Medicare in order to finance tax breaks to the wealthy. Today was the day when they were supposed to report back on how they were going to destroy and change Medicare structurally so that it would basically wither on the vine. Well, that deadline is passed. But I would still like to know what the Republican leadership has in mind for Medicare in this Congress. We still do not know, but one thing is for sure: The seniors should beware.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair appreciates the cooperation of Members in listening to the Chair when he advises the Members after they have spoken for 1 minute that their time is up.

ROADBLOCK CONGRESS

(Mr. DOGGETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, we have a town down there in Texas called Wink and a number spread out across the State that are so small they could be called Blink because you would blink and miss them.

That is the way it is with Reform Week here in this Congress. You blink and you miss it because they just abandoned it. Instead of the reform Congress, this has become the roadblock Congress and so much of the roadblock that they would throw up is to our seniors on Medicare. Because if they are ultimately successful with their plan to erect roadblocks to access to care, as Speaker NEWT GINGRICH said with pride last year and with shame this

year, "Medicare will wither on the vine."

You see, it was not just one comment. It was the similar comment of Majority Leader ARMEY that he views Medicare as an imposition on his freedom and more than the comments is the action. Instead of reforming this Congress and changing business as usual, they concentrate their efforts on weakening and dismantling the Medicare system that is serving so many of our Nation's seniors. Let us reject their Medicare approach and hold them accountable for their outrageous comments.

THE REAL GINGRICH AGENDA

(Mr. BONIOR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, Republicans are trying to tell us today that NEWT GINGRICH did not say he wants Medicare to wither on the vine. But the record suggests otherwise.

Thirteen separate times, this Gingrich Congress voted to cut Medicare to pay for tax breaks for the wealthy.

Bob Dole brags about his 1965 vote against Medicare. DICK ARMEY says Medicare is a program he would have no part of in a free world. BILL THOMAS calls Medicare "socialism." And last February, NEWT GINGRICH's own think tank ran this editorial in their newsletter with this headline: "For Freedom's Sake, Eliminate Social Security."

Mr. Speaker, that is the direction the Republicans are heading. And now that the labor movement has had the courage to tell the truth about the Gingrich agenda, and stand up for working families, the Republicans are doing all they can to silence them.

Mr. Speaker, there's an old saying: Salt doesn't hurt unless it hits an open wound. First, it was Medicare. Next, it is Social Security. That is the real Gingrich agenda.

MEDICARE

(Mrs. KENNELLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. KENNELLY. Mr. Speaker, the Speaker has said he was misquoted on Medicare. Therefore, let us for a moment consider the majority's actions on Medicare, rather than their rhetoric.

The majority passed the largest reduction in Medicare's history—\$270 billion. The majority also proposed allowing some doctors to bill beneficiaries extra charges. Furthermore, the majority's plan would have capped Medicare's expenditures below the level of expected medical inflation. And under their bill, the Medicare premium would have doubled over the next 7 years from its current level. These facts are not in dispute.

In the end, actions speak louder than words. And the majority's actions on

Medicare, as much as their rhetoric, certainly give America's seniors reason for concern.

Mr. Speaker, we need reform that protects Medicare's solvency. But we cannot afford legislation that destroys Medicare in the name of saving it.

THE TRUTH HURTS

(Mr. ANDREWS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, the truth hurts and the truth is that what the Speaker asserted in 1995, that Medicare should wither on the vine is still true in his opinion in 1996.

The truth also is that this is a Congress that has reacted when people have opposed their positions in very negative and harmful ways to all of us. In 1995 they threw a national temper tantrum and shut the Government down because they could not get what they wanted. And now in 1996 when working men and women who are members of unions like the laborer's union exercise their constitutional right to protest statements like this, they try to intimidate, coerce, and shut them down with hearings like those that are happening today. Real crime is happening on the streets of America but the crime is not happening with statements like this. We ought to give people the right to say what they want. The truth, indeed, hurts.

□ 1015

TRIBUTE TO MUHAMMAD ALI

(Mr. WARD asked and was given permission to address the house for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate a beautiful moment that will stay with me forever. Last Friday night, my family, and I watched the opening of the Olympic games. It was a wonderful spectacle of color, music, people, and culture.

The great surprise of the evening, however, was watching probably the world's most famous American, Muhammad Ali, mark the official beginning with the ceremonial lighting of the Olympic torch. We could not be prouder to have such a great sports figure calling Louisville home.

Muhammad Ali is a role model for us all. He used his talent along with fierce determination to become the best boxer in the world, proved in 1960 as he won an Olympic Gold Medal and proven in his professional career as he remains the only man to hold the boxing heavyweight crown on three separate occasions.

As he struggles under the grip of Parkinson's disease, he remains a role model. He stood tall and proud while lighting the flame, accepting this physical burden with the dignity and grace he has exhibited for his entire career.

He truly is the greatest.

UTAH IS THE RIGHT PLACE

(Ms. GREENE of Utah asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GREENE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, today marks the 149th anniversary of the day that Brigham Young and his advance party entered the Salt Lake valley in 1847 and declared: "This Is the Right Place." My great, great grandfather, William Clayton, was part of Young's group that made that epic journey which began in Illinois. And so it is with great appreciation and personal enthusiasm for my State, and its unique heritage, that I say: "Utah Is Still the Right Place."

Today, Utah is a place that has seen the desert blossom as a rose as its residents have come together to forge an existence out of a harsh, inhospitable environment. It is also a place of great cultural diversity, that will continue to require all to come together and meet their differences with mutual respect. It is a place that embraces a prosperous economy that continues to foster a warmhearted, hometown feeling, making it one of our most livable States. And now Utah will be the right place for the 2002 Winter Olympic Games.

For all Utahns, July 24 has come to be a day for reflection on what continues to make our State the right place. While our business requires me to be here today, my heart, and that of many across the country, is home in Utah today.

THE GOP IS CUTTING THE DEFICIT

(Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, both the White House and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have been patting themselves on the back so hard they've been wrenching their shoulders, all to claim credit for deficit reduction which wasn't their doing. The facts are these: The deficit would be at least \$56 billion higher today if we had followed the President's budget, but instead, we Republicans did the hard work of finding the savings the Democrats didn't have the guts to make.

The rest of the deficit reduction came from three places: First, cuts in defense as a result of the peace dividend which occurred because Ronald Reagan killed communism; second, sales of assets from the S&L cleanup already in place before Clinton took office; and third, the one thing that was the Democrats' doing; namely, tax hikes on gasoline, social security recipients, and small businessmen.

Republicans want to cut those Democratic taxes and create jobs as a result. More jobs would mean a stronger economy, which would mean a smaller deficit—no thanks at all to the Democrats.

PRESIDENT CLINTON FLIP-FLOPS ON WELFARE REFORM

(Mr. KNOLLENBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, what really is going on with the President. I know he likes to change his mind and switch his position, but this week, the President and his friends were in rare form.

We know the President has promised to reform welfare as we know it. Yet he has managed to veto reform twice behind thinly veiled excuses.

Then he supported Wisconsin's reform in a speech, but changed his mind.

Then he spoke to the Nation's Governors and said he supported welfare reform, but the next day, his handlers were changing his tune.

The very next day, Leon Panetta said the President would veto the House-passed welfare reform. And on Sunday, Vice President GORE said the very same thing.

The following day in Denver, the President changed his mind again saying he thinks he can support welfare reform.

I can not wait for tomorrow.

With the President flipping around more than a fish out of water, who knows where he will land. But remember, as my Democrat friends have said, if you do not like the President's position, just wait awhile.

With all the flips and flops, it may soon be called the Waffle House.

I yield back the balance of broken Clinton promises.

PERMISSION FOR SUNDRY COMMITTEES AND THEIR SUBCOMMITTEES TO SIT TODAY DURING THE 5-MINUTE RULE

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the following committees and their subcommittees be permitted to sit today while the House is meeting in the Committee of the Whole under the 5-minute rule:

Committee on Agriculture; Committee on Banking and Financial Services; Committee on Commerce; Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities; Committee on Government Reform and Oversight; Committee on International Relations; Committee on the Judiciary; Committee on Resources; Committee on Science; and Committee on Small Business.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the minority has been consulted and that there is no objection to these requests.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROGERS). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.